



Watch Me Grow - 4½ Years

Are your child's immunizations up-to-date?

Protect your child and his classmates by making sure he's had all recommended immunizations before he starts school:

- 3 doses: Hepatitis B (HepB)
- 5 doses: Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP)
- 4 doses: *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)
- 4 doses: Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV)
- 4 doses: Inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV)
- 2 doses: Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)
- 2 doses: Chickenpox (varicella)
- 2 doses: Hepatitis A (HepA)
- Yearly: Flu (influenza)

Talk with your doctor or nurse to find out if your child has missed any immunizations. It's not too late to catch up! Bring his Lifetime Immunization Record to every visit.

Healthy teeth matter

A child who doesn't have tooth decay and cavities does better in school. Tooth decay hurts and can cause a child to be anxious or irritable. It can also slow speech development. A child who has missing or discolored teeth may not want to participate in activities and make new friends.

Check your child's teeth often. Lift her lip and check teeth and gums for white or brown spots. If you see changes in her gums or teeth, call her dentist or doctor. Your child should see a dentist at least once a year.

You can prevent tooth decay. Help your child brush after breakfast and before bed with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Remind her to spit out any toothpaste in her mouth. Floss between any teeth that touch. Drink fluoridated water. Eat a diet low in sugar and starch.

Help your child eat well and be active

Set a good example by sitting with your child for meals or snacks, eating healthy foods, and being active.

- Don't make your child eat more than he wants. Offer him small servings of a variety of healthy foods. Let him eat as much as he wants of the healthy foods you give him.
- Your child needs about 1½ cups of vegetables and 1 cup of fruit every day. Try to offer a variety of colors every day: green, yellow, orange, red, and purple.
- Offer your child two to three healthy snacks a day. Healthy snacks are foods that are low in sugar and high in vitamins and minerals such as cheese, fresh, or canned fruits (no added sugar), nuts, and vegetables.
- Limit salty, sugary, and fatty foods.
- Help your child be active for at least 60 minutes every day. Be active as a family. Walk, swim, or play outside together.

Have fun with learning

You are your child's first and best teacher. You can help her learn while doing everyday things. A trip to the grocery store can give her a chance to help count the pieces of fruit you buy. Compare the weights of different fruits and vegetables using the vegetable scale.

Think about kindergarten early

Each school district has its own rules. It is important to go and talk to the school you want your child to go to the year before he starts school.

If your child will be going to before- or after-school care, look for a program with activities that match his interests. For example, some programs may offer outdoor sports or arts and crafts. Contact the school or Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114 or www.childcarenet.org.



Call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588 (711 tty relay) or visit ParentHelp123.org to find:

- Immunization information
- Free or low-cost health insurance
- Breastfeeding support and nutrition programs
- Free developmental screenings and referrals to get your child school ready
- Information about your Child Profile mailings

Keeping Your Child Healthy and Safe

Practice problem-solving

When your child is angry or upset about something, she needs you to help her find a solution. Talk to your child and help her explain to you why she is feeling bad. ("Are you upset because your brother took the book you were looking at?") Let her know that you understand her feelings but that certain actions are not OK. ("I'd feel angry, too. You really love that book. I know you're really mad, but it's not OK to hit your brother.") Help your child calm down (try breathing slowly and deeply together) and then help her come up with ideas. ("How else could you let your brother know you weren't finished with the book? Is there another book you can look at?")

Children and nightmares

Many children have nightmares. Here are some things you can do to help your child:

- A quiet routine before bed may help him calm down and get ready to sleep.
- Avoid scary books, movies, television, or video games. Young children can be scared by things that aren't scary to adults and older children.
- Put your child to bed in the same room every night, a room that is cool, quiet, and dark.
- When he wakes up from a bad dream, hold him and talk about the dream. Reassure him that he's safe and stay with him until he's calm.

Secondhand smoke and your child's health

Breathing secondhand smoke raises a child's risk of ear infections, asthma, and bronchitis. **Do not allow smoking in your home, or in cars** where your child rides. If you smoke, smoke outside and away from children and ask others to do the same. The chemicals in cigarettes stay on your clothing, so wear a jacket and leave it outside. If you quit smoking, you will teach your child a good lesson and improve your own health! For help, call **1-800-QUIT-NOW** or visit www.quitline.com.

Use safer household products

Household products like cleaners and yard care products can cause health problems.

- Avoid buying products labeled DANGER or POISON.
- Avoid buying bug killer and "weed and feed" products.
- Follow the instructions on product labels.
- Keep products out of the reach of children at all times.
- For cleaning recipes and shopping guides visit www.ecy.wa.gov/toxicfreetips.

Prevent falls from windows

About 3,300 children under age 7 fall from windows in the U.S. each year. **Window screens will not keep your child from falling out.** Screens are meant to keep bugs out, not kids in. Keep things your child can climb on away from windows. Keep windows from opening more than four inches by using a window stop or install a window guard to prevent falls. Visit safekidswashington.org for more information.

Falls don't only happen at home. Share this information with grandparents, child care providers, friends, and neighbors.

Street, parking lot, and driveway safety

Your child is still so small that a driver may not be able to see him in between cars or when backing up. Help keep your child and other children safe:

- Firmly hold your child's hand when near vehicles.
- Keep a lookout for children in parking lots and driveways where they could be playing.
- Walk all the way around your parked car to check for kids, toys, and pets before getting in and starting the engine.



Drowning is a major cause of death of children

Have your child take swimming lessons. If you do not know how to swim, take the time to learn. Learning to swim is fun and a great exercise option for the whole family. But even if your child has had lessons, she is not old enough to be around water without an adult watching her and within arm's length every minute. Swim in areas that have a lifeguard when you can.

Make sure your child wears a life jacket whenever she is near water. It should be a Coast Guard-approved life jacket. Make sure it fits snugly. Washington State law requires that all children under 13 wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket on boats less than 19 feet. Set a good example by always wearing a life jacket yourself.

Be careful in or near open bodies of water such as lakes, rivers, and the ocean. Even though the water may look calm, there may be strong currents that are dangerous for children and adults.

Learn child and adult CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). Go to www.heart.org to find a class.

WA State Drowning Prevention Project
www.seattlechildrens.org/dp